20:Ominde I-5 (ca. 1948) 1952
FL11 Luo FL11

the babies. With the exception of a few children in progressive households, both pagan and Christian children go without clothes; and even when they have them their provision is meagre. There is, however, a tendency for Christian children to be better clothed than those in pagan families, and the latter continue to walk naked for a much longer time.

Bedding is scanty. Dried hides, mats, and old clothes are used, the child's bedding and the mother's being usually the same. Very rarely does the mother sleep apart from her child, and only a few modern parents form an exception in constructing small beds for their children. In the daytime, when asleep, they are generally laid in some shady place beside the house, or on hides, old rags, or mats. Those who have beds may use them, but the majority of children are placed in the open where dust not infrequently blows into their mouths.

Mental and Physical Development

According to the mothers interviewed, the earliest signs of mental and physical development in babies are smiling and lifting of the arms, actions which take place after the second month. This early smile may not be an expression of pleasure but merely an imitation of the mother, who begins to tickle her baby while smiling herself in order to induce it to smile. This induced smile is more noticeable after the third month.

During the fourth month, the child generally plays alone wherever it is put down, provided that it has no serious illness. By the fifth month the senses of hearing and seeing have so far developed that when it hears a noise, the child listens and looks in the right direction.

The period of sitting the child up begins during the sixth month, although trials are made early in the fifth month, while in the course of the seventh month, with

20:Ominde I-5 (ca. 1948) 1952
FL11 Luo FL11

856 constant help from the mother, the nurse, and other members of the family, the child is able to sit up without support.

[854] The practice of straddling the child on the hip begins during the sixth month. From this period there is a rapid development of its manipulative skill. Between the seventh and eighth months the child begins to crawl about on the floor, and will crawl away from wherever it is seated. As the child's manipulative skill develops he begins to pick up things that attract the eyes, often knocking them down repeatedly. The mouth is also used in testing the properties of articles. There is thus some difficulty in preventing the child from putting dirty things into its mouth.

If a child is not watched it may eat a large quantity of soil, a practice facilitated by its surroundings, the floor and ground in front of the house being bare earth. It is [164] therefore not surprising that children of this age frequently suffer from serious stomach trouble. Even before [854] the children begin to sit up, the nurses, who themselves [857] are only between six and eleven years old, do not effectively prevent them from touching dirty things, because they are sometimes tempted to run away to play, leaving the babies to look after themselves.

856 A child is persuaded to walk by holding its hands and 868 helping it along. In this process the older person repeats the words 'Taa, taa,' in a monotone. The practice is continued daily until the child is able to walk; but as soon as it can support itself on its feet the mother or nurse may move away a short distance and try to induce it to come nearer. Every member of the family takes a great interest in all this and loses no opportunity to help the child.

According to my observations, cooing and the earliest symptoms of speech begin to come into evidence in the

20:Ominde I-5 (ca. 1948) 1952
FL11 Luo FL11

eighth month. When Ageng'o was eight months old he repeated the same performance every time he saw me come in. First he clapped his hands, uttering a sound like 'Aaa, Aaa'; then he clasped them together, pressing them repeatedly against his lips while he made the sound 'Aa baa ba'. This pleased his mother, who was so excited that she spoke to the child in adult language. In addition, Ageng'o could seize two maize cobs, bring them together in front of him, lie on his stomach and push them round in a circle.

There was also a conspicuous development of pleasure when he began playing. There can be no doubt that he derived great enjoyment from pushing the maize cobs along, because that kind of play was usually accompanied by a great deal of noise not intended to attract the attention of anyone. Having scooped the ground with a stick, he would throw it away and, with his fingers spread out, sweep the ground before him. All this indicated the multiple experiences of a developing mind which aimed at satisfying its own curiosity by exploring into the nature of things. A child of this age has no fear of fire until it is scorched by a glowing ember.

At the time when the child begins to say '*Baa, baa, baa*', the mother trains it to imitate sounds of names like '*ba-ba* (*babu, mama, mamu*)'. But the use of adult language in talking to the baby begins as early as the first month. Thus when taking up a baby of one or two months, a mother may say, '*Bi mama*' (come my mother) or '*Bi wuora*' (come my father), according to whom the child was named after. This of course means nothing to the child at such an early stage. Following '*ba-ba*' and '*ma-ma*', it is taught the names of things and people in the family. Gradually a child gets to know these, as well as the words for a few things including food. Next it is taught how to ask for things. On the whole, children do

20:Ominde I-5 (ca. 1948) 1952
FL11 Luo FL11

856 not begin to speak until after two years, when they are
868 barely able to construct short simple sentences.

Discipline

861 Formal training in discipline begins as early as the
855 seventh month, at the time when the child may put some dirty object to its lips. Thus a mother, finding her child with soil in its mouth, may slap it gently as she removes the soil, or the hands of the child may be tapped with anything convenient. A child crawling towards the fire would be immediately pulled away, and sometimes it might be frightened with the glowing end of a burning twig in order to impress the danger upon its mind.

856 It is never certain when a child is first going to walk,
164 for the conditions under which children are brought up are such that it is impossible for them to escape being seriously ill at one time or another. Hence the period is largely determined by the health of the child. The average time ranges from eleven to fourteen months. A child who develops very rapidly through the early stages causes its parents much worry, for it is believed that a fast-growing child never survives.

855 *Effects of the child's emotions.* The mother's attitude to-
[844] wards the emotions of the child is based on the deep impression left on her mind by the strain of the birth. Thus, I have come across women who told me quite convincingly that whenever they heard one of their children cry out vigorously they again felt the pain they had experienced during its birth. A mother tolerates the emotional outbursts of her child not only because she loves it but even more because she struggled to bear it. This seems to be the real cause of the so-called humanity of women towards children in contrast with the indifference sometimes shown by men. Instead of setting the

20:Ominde I-5 (ca. 1948) 1952
FL11 Luo FL11

II

CHILDHOOD

Between Two and Six Years

856 *Physical development.* Between the ages of two and five the means of locomotion mature. Healthy children are able during this period to walk and run about, and, even as early as this, young boys and girls begin to show subtle differences in their motor behaviour. Female children are less vigorous in their muscular movements, while male children tend to exaggerate them. But on the whole both sexes make good use of this newly acquired power. There is an increased desire to move about, intensified by a wish to meet young acquaintances at play.

855 857 The work of the nurse then changes. Instead of looking after the child, she does simple housework, such as fetching water from the stream or well, and collecting firewood. In place of being its foster-mother she becomes the child's major playmate.

From this time onwards children grow rather thin. It is assumed that this slenderness of body is a sign that they are growing up. It is also believed that at this time male children are stronger than their female contemporaries.

856 868 *Mental development.* The mental development of a child of this age is marked by a predominance of fantasy play, and a rapid mastery of spoken language. The imaginative play occupies longer periods than the other activities. The child learns language from its playmates as well as from the conscious efforts of members of its family. The effectiveness of the speech taught by its parents becomes more pronounced while the orders given begin to be better understood.

20:Ominde I-5 (ca. 1948) 1952
FL11 Luo FL11

868 disciplined to prevent her from escaping the much
593 cherished traditional education. Discipline is weakened, however, when the nurse is not the daughter of the woman engaging her. In these circumstances the mistress, fearing to lose the nurse's services, tolerates behaviour she would not countenance in her own daughter.

868 In the process of training, the young girl is expected to be competent in household duties as early as possible. Mothers have frequently told me that girls who begin practising household duties later than the school-going age, are generally very inefficient in domestic work; thus in their early discipline mothers protect themselves against future blame for poor training.

Apart from the primary motive of training the young girl as a prospective wife, the mother is influenced by her desire to make her daughter of practical use to her-
[594] self as soon as possible. The help from girls of school-going age greatly relieves the constant pressure of a woman's household tasks. This training also makes a girl observe feeding manners more strictly.

861 In Luo families, a young girl is at the mercy of every-
593 one except her younger brothers and sisters. When disobedient she is whipped with a stick. She thus becomes equally tyrannical towards her juniors when they disobey her. One girl told me that if her sister disobeyed her she seized the child, knocked her down, and beat her. This reflects the general attitude.

857 *Nursing.* Although some girls of this later age act as nurses, nursing proper is more characteristic of the earlier stage. When she nears the age of eleven, the young girl rebels against nursing and runs back to her home or, if nursing her own brothers and sisters, escapes to relatives out of reach of her immediate family. This
● [856] break takes place as soon as the breasts begin to develop and is perhaps a revolutionary step caused by the grow-

20:Ominde I-5 (ca. 1948) 1952
FL11 Luo FL11

857 ing interest in her body and in the opposite sex. It may
856 be said that the loss of concern for her charge and concentration on herself is a sign announcing the emotional disturbances of adolescence. Young girls of this age now

854
291

NURSE: AYOMA

857 consider nursing beneath their dignity, and their revolt
856 is encouraged by increasing association with members of the opposite sex who would disdain talking to a child-nurse.

855 *Feeding.* The girls of this age group eat normal adult
264 food, at the same time as adults, but the younger members of the group occasionally have a little food kept for them by their mothers. The consideration shown them as children depends on whether there are others younger

1 [ie. From six to eleven years old - Analyst.]

20:Ominde I-5 (ca. 1948) 1952
FL11 Luo FL11

IV

ADOLESCENCE

857 593 In the interim period between childhood and adolescence there comes a time when a girl's ability to deal with domestic work is more advanced than her physical and mental development. It is during this period that the mother, still occupying a central position as adviser and supervisor of the girl's work, finds difficulty in the management of her daughter. Since the domestic work of her household is heavy, the mother uses all kinds of pressure to induce her daughter to do as much as she can.

856 [572] The girl's life at this time is characterized by her increased interest in boys and desire to come into contact with them. The friendships established during childhood with other young girls are weakened by the development of a new object of friendship in the opposite sex. During this time the breasts of most girls develop noticeably. The girls show great interest in this development and employ various means to stimulate it. An instance of this interest can sometimes be seen among those who stuff clothes in their bosoms to exaggerate the size.

On the whole, the period differs only in the fact that the girls definitely aspire to be grown-ups and are also more interested in friendship with boys.

Characteristics of Adolescence

883 This new period is the time when the mother leaves her daughter to bring her knowledge of domestic work to perfection by her own efforts. As compared with the school-going age, there is little or no interference from